

Admission policy (27th April 2020)

Admission Policy of Bray Institute of Further Education

School/College Address: Novara Avenue, Bray, County Wicklow

Roll number: 70770V

School/College Patron/s: KWETB

1. Introduction

This Admission Policy complies with the requirements of the Education Act 1998, the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018 and the Equal Status Act 2000. In drafting this policy, the board of management of the College has consulted with College staff, the College patron and with students/parents of children attending the College.

The policy was approved by the College patron on 27th April 2020. It is published on the College's website and will be made available in hardcopy, on request, to any person who requests it.

The relevant dates and timelines for BIFE admission process are set out in the College's annual admission notice which is published annually on the College's website at least one week before the commencement of the admission process for the College year concerned.

This policy must be read in conjunction with the annual admission notice for the College year concerned.

The application form for admission is published on the Institute's website and will be made available in hardcopy on request to any person who requests it.

2. Characteristic spirit and general objectives of the College

MISSION STATEMENT

BIFE's mission, in line with that of Kildare Wicklow ETB is to provide comprehensive and quality assured educational services, meeting local life-long learning needs. We do this through the provision of

- a wide range of quality assured programmes that lead to nationally and internationally recognised qualifications. These include programmes that are relevant to the national skills strategy, and to personal, social and community development.

- a supportive, friendly and professional service that allows for full and part-time participation. This enables adult learners to accumulate skills and qualifications at an appropriate time and pace.

We are dedicated to ensuring that adult learners discover, optimize and realize their full potential in their chosen field of study.

THE INSTITUTE'S ETHOS

The ethos of the Institute is one which is rich in opportunities for each person to explore his/her identity and to build his/her self-esteem, free from false expectations and from attitudes which would hinder personal, social and academic development.

The Institute encourages everyone to look outwards to the local community and to the wider world. There is an understanding that there is no "right" culture but many changing cultures to which everyone, regardless of ability, gender, race, colour or sexual orientation, has a contribution to make. This diversity is a source of richness to be greatly enjoyed. In order for persons to value others, they must first value themselves. Learners' sense of themselves is reinforced when the people around them:

- Acknowledge their existence and lifestyle.
- Listen to them seriously.
- Take account of what they say.
- Remember their names.

A Learner can expect:

- To feel cared for and respected by all members of the Institute's community.
- To feel respected and be treated fairly and equally by others.
- To feel free from ridicule, sarcasm and remarks likely to undermine his/her dignity.
- To be free from intimidation and bullying.
- To learn without interference in a pleasant working environment.
- To become an active partner with the Institute in his/her own education

3. Admission Statement

BIFE will not discriminate in its admission of a student to the College on any of the following:

- (a) the gender ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (b) the civil status ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (c) the family status ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (d) the sexual orientation ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (e) the religion ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (f) the disability ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (g) the ground of race of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,

- (h) the Traveller community ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned, or
- (i) the ground that the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned has special educational needs

As per section 61 (3) of the Education Act 1998, 'civil status ground', 'disability ground', 'discriminate', 'family status ground', 'gender ground', 'ground of race', 'religion ground', 'sexual orientation ground' and 'Traveller community ground' shall be construed in accordance with section 3 of the Equal Status Act 2000.

4. Admission of Students

This Institute shall admit each student seeking admission except where –

- a) the Institute is oversubscribed (please see section 6 below for further details)
- b) a parent of a student, when required by the principal in accordance with section 23(4) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, fails to confirm in writing that the code of behaviour of the Institute is acceptable to him or her and that he or she shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the student
- c) Students have not met the Entry Requirements of BIFE.
- d) Students who have completed the Leaving Certificate or Leaving Cert Applied or equivalent certification are eligible subject to reaching the course requirement. Students presenting QQI Level 4 or equivalent certification may also apply subject to meeting the course requirement. Students without educational qualifications but with relevant experience/interest in an area will be considered. A copy of results will be required on enrolment. Mature students and students presenting alternative qualifications are welcome to apply.
- e) Applications from individuals who do not hold the Leaving Certificate or equivalent qualification, will only be considered, based on the entry requirements of the course and provided they have reached 18 years of age on the 31st December following their entry onto their chosen course at BIFE.
- f) Places on all courses are limited. Applicants will be interviewed. In some cases, it may be necessary to bring a portfolio of work to the interview or attend auditions.
- g) The Learner Code of Conduct should be read and accepted by all students wishing to enrol.
- h) An offer of a place on a course is made subject to the Applicant meeting the relevant course requirements.
- i) In order to progress from Level 5 to a Level 6 programme all applicants must provide evidence of their Level 5 qualifications. Applicants who wish to have exemptions considered must provide original copies of certificates at interview.
- j) Recognition of prior learning and experience may be taken into account for Mature Students in relation to application for a Level 5 or Level 6 programme.
- k) Decisions made in relation to admission are made by Management in accordance with the school's Enrolment & Admission Policy.
- l) The final date for students to enrol on a course is 1st October in the year of the course.

5. Oversubscription

In the event that the College is oversubscribed, the College will, when deciding on applications for admission, apply the following selection criteria in the order listed below to those applications that are received within the timeline for receipt of applications as set out in the School's annual admission notice:

Criteria

- Places on all courses are limited. Applicants may be interviewed and / or attend auditions to access suitability. In some cases, it may be necessary to bring a portfolio of work to the interview.
- The Learner Code of Conduct should be read and accepted by all students wishing to enrol.
- An offer of a place on a course is made subject to the Applicant meeting the relevant course requirements.
- In order to progress from Level 5 to a Level 6 programme all applicants must provide evidence of their Level 5 qualifications. Applicants who wish to have exemptions considered must provide original copies of certificates at interview.
- Decisions made in relation to admission are made by Management in accordance with the school's Enrolment & Admission Policy

Enrolment Procedures

Step 1: PLC students wishing to enrol in Bray Institute of Further Education must complete an online Application Form at www.bife.ie.

Step 2: Attend for Interview.

Applicants will be invited for interview and/ or audition at the Institute. Applicants will be selected on suitability and a first come/first served basis. He/She should bring the following to the interview:

- A copy of Leaving Certificate results (if applicable)
- A brief Curriculum Vitae
- A Portfolio of Work (where necessary)
- References (where necessary)
- Applicants with special requirements should notify the Institute at time of application and at interview and arrange to speak to the Special Needs Support Officer as early as possible.

Step 3:

Successful applicants will be offered a place by post subject to them achieving the basic entry requirements laid out in the prospectus and must secure their place by paying an acceptance fee of 50 euros. This acceptance fee is non-refundable.

All other fees will be refunded if the applicant subsequently decides not to take their place before 21st September in the year of the course. Failure to pay the relevant fee may result in a lapse of their offered place.

Step 4:

All learners must register at the Institute on the designated registration date.

6. What will not be considered or taken into account

In accordance with section 62(7)(e) of the Education Act, the Institute will not consider or take into account any of the following in deciding on applications for admission or when placing a student on a waiting list for admission to the Institute:

- (a) BIFE does not charge tuition fees but students have to contribute for certain student services such as library services.
- (b) a student's academic ability, or skills other than those set out in the requirements of the plc course
- (c) the occupation, financial status, academic ability, skills or aptitude of a student's parents;
- (d) a requirement that a student, or his or her parents, attend an interview, open day or other meeting as a condition of admission;
- (e) a student's connection to the School by virtue of a member of his or her family attending or having previously attended the School;
- (f) the date and time on which an application for admission was received by the School provided it is within the time frame set out in the annual admission notice of the Institute for the college year concerned.

7. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to BIFE will be based on the following:

- Our Institute's admission policy
- The Institute's annual admission notice
- The information provided by the applicant in the Institute's official application form received during the period specified in our annual admission notice for receiving applications

Selection criteria that are not included in our Institute's admission policy will not be used to make a decision on an application for a place in our Institute.

8. Notifying applicants of decisions

Applicants will be informed in writing as to the decision of the Institute, within the timeline outlined in the annual admissions notice.

If a student is not offered a place in our Institute, the reasons why they were not offered a place will be communicated in writing to the applicant.

Applicants will be informed of the right to seek a review/right of appeal of the Institute's decision .

Acceptance of an offer of a place by an applicant

In accepting an offer of admission from BIFE, the applicant must confirm that she/he is taking up a place within three weeks.

Circumstances in which offers may not be made or may be withdrawn

An offer of admission may not be made or may be withdrawn by BIFE where—
it is established that information contained in the application is false or misleading.
an applicant fails to confirm acceptance of an offer of admission on or before the date set out in the annual admission notice of the College.
the student or the parent of a student (if under 18 years old), when required by the principal in accordance with section 23(4) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, fails to confirm in writing that the code of behaviour of the College is acceptable to him or her and that he or she shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the student; or
an applicant has failed to comply with the requirements of 'acceptance of an offer' as set out above.

Sharing of Data with other Schools/Colleges

Applicants should be aware that section 66(6) of the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018 allows for the sharing of certain information between Schools/Colleges in order to facilitate the efficient admission of students.

Waiting list in the event of oversubscription

In the event of there being more applications in the year concerned than there are places available, a waiting list of students whose applications for admission to BIFE were unsuccessful due to the Institute being oversubscribed will be compiled and will remain valid for the academic year in which admission is being sought.

Placement on the waiting list of BIFE is in the order of priority assigned to the students' applications after the Institute has applied the selection criteria in accordance with this admission policy.

Offers of any subsequent places that become available for and during the college year in relation to which admission is being sought will be made to those students on the waiting list, in accordance with the order of priority in relation to which the students have been placed on the list.

Late Applications

All applications for admission received after the closing date as outlined in the annual admission notice will be considered and decided upon in accordance with our admissions policy, the Education Admissions to School Act 2018 and any regulations made under that Act.

Procedures for admission of students to other years and during the School year

The procedures of the College in relation to the admission of students who are not already admitted to the College to classes or years other than the College's intake group are as follows:

Applications to BIFE open on December 1st of the year previous to the course starting. Earlier Applications are not accepted as the courses being offered by the School may vary from year to year depending on demand and other factors.

An offer of a place on a course is made subject to the Applicant meeting the relevant course requirements.

In order to progress from Level 5 to a Level 6 programme all applicants must provide evidence of their Level 5 qualifications. Applicants who wish to have exemptions considered must provide original copies of certificates at interview.

The procedures of the Institute in relation to the admission of students who are not already admitted to the Institute, after the commencement of the college year in which admission is sought, are as follows:

- The final date for students to enrol on a course is 1st October in the year of the course

Declaration in relation to the non-charging of fees

The Board of BIFE or any persons acting on its behalf will not charge tuition fees for or seek payment or contributions (howsoever described) as a condition of enrolment. However, students will be required to contribute to the cost of student services such as library services.

Costs

Courses at Bray Institute of Further Education are funded largely by the European Social Fund. There are no tuition costs/fees for Irish or EU citizens undertaking PLC courses. However, all learners are required to pay the following:

A small administration cost on acceptance.

A student contribution to non-tuition costs. This includes contribution towards field trips, special guest lectures, library services and materials for courses as a general fund to maintain the learning resources for PLC courses.

Exam fees,

A Government Levy of 200 euros paid annually. (Learners who are holders of a medical card, in receipt of a SUSI grant, VTOS or BTEA allowance are exempt from paying this charge).

International Applicants

The Institute welcomes applications from qualified international applicants. International (non-EU) students must comply with Irish immigration requirements and must present an Immigration Certificate of Registration / GNIB Card in order to register.

As the Institute is not listed on the Internationalisation Register, applications can only be considered from applicants who are holders of a Stamp 4 OR stamp 1G. (Please note the only exceptions to this are those students covered by DES Circular 0048/2015).

For further details, please contact the Institute office.

Garda Vetting

Garda Vetting is mandatory for Health and Leisure programmes and may be required for other courses.

General Data Protection Regulations 2018.

Under the GDPR Legislation, BIFE acts as a constituent College of KWETB.

Students are required to authorise KWETB to process their personal data relating to their course place at the College.

Reviews/Appeals

Where an applicant has been refused admission due to the College being oversubscribed, the applicant must request a review of that decision by the board of management prior to making an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

Appeal due to oversubscription.

An Applicant who was refused admission because the college is oversubscribed and who wishes to appeal this decision must submit his/her appeal in writing, must complete a Section 29 Appeal Application Form, available from the College office and on the College's website.

Bray Institute of Further Education

Novara Avenue, Bray.

Email: bifeenquiries@kwetb.ie

The appeal application will be reviewed by the board of management of Bray Institute of Further Education. Such an appeal must be brought within fourteen calendar days of receipt by the Applicant of the College's decision to refuse to admit. However, if a different time period for the bringing of such an appeal is specified by the Minister for Education and Skills after the publication of this Policy, same shall apply instead.

If an Applicant is not satisfied with the decision of the board of management, or the board of management is not in a position to review the decision to refuse admission, the Applicant may apply to bring an appeal to an appeals committee established by the Minister for Education and Skills under section 29A of the Education Act 1998.

Appeal where refusal was for a reason other than oversubscription:

Where an applicant has been refused admission due to a reason other than the College being oversubscribed, the applicant may request a review of that decision by the board of management prior to making an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998. (see Review of decisions by the Board of Management)

An Applicant who was refused admission to Bray Institute of Further Education for a reason other than the College being oversubscribed and who wishes to appeal this decision may choose to put his/her appeal in writing, must complete a Section 29 Appeal Application Form, available from the College office and on the College's website. The appeal application will be reviewed by the board of management of Bray Institute of Further Education. Such an appeal must be brought within fourteen calendar days of receipt by the Applicant of the College's decision to refuse to admit. However, if a different time period for the bringing of such an appeal is specified by the Minister for Education and Skills after the publication of this policy, same shall apply instead.

Alternatively, s/he may choose to apply to bring an appeal to an appeals committee established by the Minister for Education and Skills under section 29A of the Education Act 1998.

If an Applicant who chooses to appeal to the board of management is not satisfied with the decision of the board of management, the Applicant may also apply to bring an appeal to an appeals committee established by the Minister for Education and Skills under section 29A of the Education Act 1998.

Basis for appeal:

As required by section 29C(2) of the Education Act 1998, an application to appeal must be based on the implementation of this Admission Policy, the content of the College's Admission Notice and also set out the grounds of the request to appeal the decision.